

# Just the Facts...

## Pregnancy/Postpartum Physical Training Program

### *What is the purpose of PPPT?*

The purpose of the Pregnancy/Postpartum Physical Training Program (PPPT) is to provide the senior commander with a standardized physical training (PT) program for pregnant and postpartum Soldiers and to train local PPPT Program personnel in pregnancy and postpartum fitness.



### *Why is the PPPT Program important to the Army?*

- ⌚ The American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists (ACOG) encourages healthy women to exercise moderately for 30 minutes most days of the week throughout pregnancy and postpartum within ACOG guidelines and under the advice of their obstetrician. (Committee Opinion Number 267, January 2002, ACOG, "Exercise During Pregnancy and the Postpartum Period")
- ⌚ The lack of a standardized content for PPPT with sustained implementation Army-wide presents a readiness and morale issue for the Soldier and the unit. Most unit-training personnel have not been trained to lead exercises for pregnant/postpartum Soldiers, nor are they familiar with the ACOG guidelines. In the past, numerous Soldiers were left to train on their own or not train at all. For Reserve, National Guard Soldiers and remote Soldiers this is always the case.
- ⌚ An Army study showed significant Army Physical Fitness Test (APFT) failures, height/weight failures, and increased injury and illness rates when active duty Soldiers not in structured PPPT returned to unit PT after pregnancy and 6 months of postpartum recovery.

### *What are the benefits of participating in PPPT?*

Current scientific literature supports many physical and psychological benefits of remaining physically active during and after pregnancy. The benefits are:



- ⌚ Exercise during pregnancy and postpartum maintains aerobic fitness and reduces physical complaints experienced during pregnancy. Moderate exercise promotes a more rapid recovery from the birth process and a faster return to required physical fitness levels. For military leadership this can mean successful passage of the APFT.
- ⌚ Postpartum women who are active during and after pregnancy retain less pregnancy weight, preventing unwanted body fat gain. For military leaders this means ensuring Soldiers meet regulation standards for height and weight.
- ⌚ Females that continue to exercise during their pregnancy and postpartum receive huge psychological benefits, remain more socially active and are more able to adapt to the challenges of motherhood. For military leadership this has been correlated with higher retention rates and increased mission readiness.
- ⌚ Exercising has also been shown to have positive effects on labor and delivery through fewer medical interventions, reduced operative deliveries, shorter active labor and less likelihood to deliver prematurely, resulting in reduced hospital stays. For military leaders this means quicker return to duty and increased Soldier readiness.

### ***What is the implementation model for PPPT?***

- ⌚ PPPT is a senior commander's program, with mandatory attendance for Soldiers in unit PT.
- ⌚ A Soldier will participate in pregnancy PT after receiving a pregnancy profile and clearance from her profiling officer to participate in the PPPT program.
- ⌚ Preferred implementation is as one consolidated program per installation.
- ⌚ Instructor Trainers and Medical Experts will be trained in pregnancy fitness, and train Exercise Leaders to lead pregnancy/postpartum PT sessions.
- ⌚ A NCOIC Instructor Trainer will coordinate the day-to-day operations of the PPPT Program.
- ⌚ The Medical Treatment Facility will provide a Medical Expert as the medical consultant for pregnancy/postpartum issues and ensure an Education Coordinator facilitates educational classes.
- ⌚ PPPT will be conducted at least 3 times per week during unit PT time.
- ⌚ An at-home PT program will be encouraged for participant use during convalescent leave.
- ⌚ A Soldier will participate in postpartum PT for up to 6 months following delivery.
- ⌚ Reserve, National Guard or remote Soldiers have specially-designed DVDs and a workbook available to them after medical clearance has been confirmed. For access to these materials refer to the PPPT website.



### ***Where can I learn more about exercise and pregnancy?***

Exercising Through Your Pregnancy, Clapp, James F., Addicus Books, 2002.  
Women's Fitness Program Development, Cowlin, Ann F., Human Kinetics, 2002.  
Planning Your Pregnancy and Birth, The American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists, 2000.  
Fit for Two: Official YMCA Prenatal Exercise Guide, YMCA of the USA, Human Kinetics, 1995.

### ***What Army regulations impact this program?***

- ⌚ AR 40-3, Medical, Dental, and Veterinary Care, 22 February 2008
- ⌚ AR 40-501, Standards of Medical Fitness [RAR 2008/09/10], 14 December 2007
- ⌚ AR 350-1, Army Training and Leader Development, 03 August 2007
- ⌚ AR 600-9, Army Weight Control Program, 27 November 2006
- ⌚ AR 600-8-10, Leaves & Passes, 15 February 2006
- ⌚ AR 600-8-24, Officer Transfers and Discharges, 12 April 2006
- ⌚ AR 614-30, Overseas Service, 12 August 2008
- ⌚ AR 635-200, Enlisted Personnel, 6 June 2005
- ⌚ AR 670-1, Wear and Appearance of Army Uniforms and Insignia, 3 February 2005



### ***What is the current status of this program?***

- ⌚ A PPPT Train-the-Trainer Leader Course has been developed, which includes instructional videos, manuals and a training CD for the Medical Expert, Instructor Trainer. A PPPT Implementation Guide provides guidance on establishing and operating a local PPPT installation program. For information on training contact the USACHPPM POC.
- ⌚ The Program is being implemented at multiple sites. The metrics employed to evaluate the success of the program are APFT scores, AR 600-9 pass rate, and appropriate medical outcomes. Evaluation tools are available upon request from the PPPT website.



- ⌚ Staffing of the program through Army leadership was completed with the release of ALARACT 168/2008 in July 2008. The Army PPPT Program is being implemented Army-wide as a component of the US Army Physical Fitness Program. The standardization of an Army-wide PPPT Program, issue #532, will be presented at the Army Family Action Plan General Officer Steering Committee (AFAP GOSC) Meeting in 2009 as a completed issue. This high visibility paved the way for resolution of issues regarding proponentcy, leader training, and organizational responsibility.